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ABSTRACT

In the spring of 1975, a total of 634 colleges and universities were surveyed to determine the institutions' use of the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) General Examinations to award credit. Of the total, 535 institutions completed and returned usable questionnaires. This report presents a full account of the survey and its findings. Some of the principal findings are: (1) a majority of the CLEP-user institutions permit any student to earn credit through the General Examinations provided he or she is enrolled in the institution; (2) most of the students who receive such credit are full-time students; (3) credit is most often used to satisfy a course requirement, and less frequently applied to area or distribution requirements without particular course designation; (4) on the average, three-fourths of the students submitting scores receive credit in some area. Of the total number of scores submitted, about 60 percent are passing; (5) institutions that have conducted research on the use of the General Examinations have found that the grades of students who receive credit tend to be equal to or better than the grades of other students; and (6) a small percentage of the institutions reported encountering difficulties in dealing with both CLEP scores and the College Board's Advanced Placement Examination for awarding credit. (RC)

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The
**CLEP
GENERAL
EXAMINATIONS**
*in American Colleges
and Universities*

Jerilee Grandy
and
Walter M. Shea



COLLEGE-LEVEL EXAMINATION PROGRAM
OF THE
COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION BOARD

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An Advisory Committee to oversee the study was appointed by J. Boyd Page, Chairman of the Commission on Educational Credit. Its members include:

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Educational Testing Service
Princeton, New Jersey
December 1975

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*Member of the Commission on Educational Credit

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BACKGROUND AND HIGHLIGHTS

Since 1967, more than 1½ million candidates have taken nearly 3 million College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests. The test scores were sent to hundreds of American colleges and universities, which in all likelihood used them as a basis for awarding course credit.

But how much credit, and to whom? For what tests, under what conditions? In the spring of 1975, the College Entrance Examination Board surveyed a total of 634 colleges and universities that used CLEP to find out.

The survey was limited to the CLEP General Examinations (English Composition, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Humanities, and Social Sciences and History), which may be taken singly or in any combination. The survey questionnaire asked for specific information about CLEP General Examination scores received during the 1973-74 academic year, a year in which more than 300,000 General Examinations were administered throughout the United States and abroad.

Ninety-five percent of the institutions invited to participate did so. Of them, 535 completed and returned usable questionnaires.

This report offers a full account of the survey and its findings. Some of the principal findings follow:

1. A majority of the CLEP-user institutions permit any student to earn credit through the General Examinations provided he or she is enrolled in the institution (page 7).
2. Most of the students who receive such credit are full-time students (page 12).
3. Credit is most often used to satisfy a particular course requirement, and less frequently applied to area or distribution requirements without particular course designation (pages 7-8).
4. On the average, three-fourths of the students submitting CLEP General Examination scores receive credit in some area. Of the total number of scores submitted, about 60 percent are passing (pages 10-11).
5. Institutions that have conducted research on the use of the General Examinations have found that the grades of students who receive CLEP credit tend to be equal to or better than the grades of other students (page 12).
6. In determining cutting scores, most institutions use a combination of standards, the most common being the 1963 national norms (pages 8-9).
7. Institutions granting credit for the General Examinations tend to use the CLEP Subject Examinations and a variety of other credit-by-examination instruments also (pages 14-15).
8. A small percentage of the colleges and universities reported encountering difficulties in dealing with both CLEP scores and the College Board's Advanced Placement Examination grades for awarding credit (page 14).

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INTRODUCTION

The CLEP General Examinations are available to students from three different sources. The chief one is the CLEP national center system, through which approximately 210,000 General Examinations were administered in 1973-74 at 800 CLEP centers located, for the most part, on college campuses. Active-duty military personnel who had access to the General Examinations through the United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI) took 50,000 tests in 1973-74. USAFI has since been superseded by the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Educational Services (DANTES) as the source of CLEP General Examinations for servicemen and women. The third delivery system for the General Examinations is the Testing Academic Achievement (TAA) Program of the College Entrance Examination Board, through which institutions may test their enrolled students using retired forms of the CLEP General Examinations. Some 55,000 General Examinations were administered through TAA during 1973-74.

Although the General Examinations have had an impact on American higher education, the nature and extent of their use remained matters not fully investigated. Many institutions and state systems have carried out research projects involving the General Examinations, but an extensive national study of them had not been made.

In May 1974, the College Board and the Commission on Educational Credit (CEC) of the American Council on Education agreed to the need for a national study of the CLEP General Examinations. CEC would use the results of the national study to review the recommendation made by its predecessor, the Commission on Accreditation of Service Experience, to award credit on the basis of the General Examinations.

CEC accepted the responsibility of appointing an advisory committee to oversee the study, to be conducted by Educational Testing Service. The study would involve two specific projects: 1) a renorming and validity study of the General Examinations, and the development of new national norms, and 2) a survey of institutions' use of the General Examinations to award credit, presented in this report.

To obtain the most complete information possible on current use of the General Examinations, the advisory committee approved a plan to survey all institutions that had received some minimum number of General Examination scores from national centers, TAA, or USAFI during the academic year 1973-74. The entire population would be surveyed, not just a sample. For this purpose, a questionnaire, to be sent to all institutions with some minimum experience in awarding credit for the General Examinations, was designed at ETS and subsequently approved by the advisory committee.

Several problems were encountered in trying to assemble a list of colleges and universities that use General

Examination scores from national centers, USAFI, and TAA. First, the records for the three sources indicated only the number of tests sent or scores reported. None possessed information on whether, in fact, any institution actually used the scores as a basis for awarding credit or for making any other academic decision. Hence, there likely would be institutions in the group surveyed that received scores but made no use of them.

Another limitation in the records of the three sources was the fact that some colleges and universities accept student score reports, transcripts from other institutions, or other official or semiofficial documents in awarding credit for the General Examinations. Such users would not be drawn into the survey unless they also appeared in the national center, USAFI, or TAA lists.

A second problem was how to determine an appropriate minimum number of scores received by an institution in order for it to be included in the survey. Because of differences in the three sources, the minimum had to be determined in different ways.

For the national centers, each institution that received 10 or more candidate score reports was included in the survey. The records, however, did not identify candidates reporting CLEP General Examinations only. Therefore, a number of institutions that receive and accept only Subject Examination scores for granting credit were unavoidably included. In all, 544 colleges and universities from the national center system were included in the survey.

The minimum requirement for TAA was that an institution should have ordered 10 or more tests. A total of 63 institutions satisfied this requirement. Many TAA users, however, employ the General Examinations for purposes other than awarding credit, for example, institutional research, as qualifying tests, and so on. To avoid excluding institutions that did use the General Examinations for awarding credit, all institutions using TAA and meeting the minimum requirement were sent questionnaires.

The 66 institutions receiving 10 or more official General Examination score reports from USAFI constituted the third group added to the survey pool. By combining these three sources, 634 colleges and universities were included in the survey. Of them, 39 institutions qualified as minimum users in more than one way.

Survey Procedures

In March 1975, questionnaires were sent to the 634 institutions, with a letter describing the purpose of the study and a self-addressed envelope. They were sent directly to the official who had been assigned by his or her institution to receive CLEP score reports. These individuals were expected to have the fullest knowledge of

the information and data sought through the questionnaire. (Copies of the questionnaire and letter appear in the appendixes.) Two weeks after the questionnaire was mailed, a postcard reminder was mailed to institutions that had not yet responded. After an additional two weeks, a follow-up letter and another copy of the questionnaire were sent to the remaining nonrespondents. Later, telephone contact was made with most of those whose questionnaires had not been received.

Survey Results

Of the 634 questionnaires mailed, 605 were returned, yielding a response rate of 95 percent. Of the 605, 70 stated that they did not use the General Examinations for awarding credit and, therefore, they had not completed the questionnaire. Altogether, 535 completed questionnaires were available for analysis.

Responding Institutions

A total of 402 institutions (75 percent) were four-year colleges or universities, while 133 (25 percent) were two-year institutions. Somewhat more than half the institutions participating are located in the South and Midwest, with lesser numbers located in the Middle States (14 percent), New England (7 percent), Southwest (10 percent), and West (14 percent) (see below).

Region	Two-year Colleges	Four-year Colleges and Universities
Midwest	46	142
Middle States	18	55
New England	9	28
South	34	74
Southwest	7	45
West	19	58

INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES REGARDING CLEP GENERAL EXAMINATIONS

Section A of the questionnaire dealt with three important policy matters that institutions must face in using the General Examinations for credit: student qualifications or eligibility for receiving credit, methods of awarding credit, and determination of cutting scores.

Student Qualifications

Ninety-six percent of the institutions responding to the survey stated (in items A-1-A-3) that any high school graduate is eligible to earn credit through the General Examinations. Only 4 percent (19 institutions) require a student to be out of high school a minimal number of years, generally two.

Before credit earned through the General Examinations can be entered in a student's record, 133 colleges or universities (25 percent) require successful completion of a specific number of courses at that institution. Many institutions set the number at 5 courses, but 75 percent of the respondents have no such regulation.

When asked if a student must satisfy any other conditions before receiving credit, 334 institutions (62 percent) answered "No." The 191 respondents answering "Yes" cited such regulations as the following: The General Examination credit may not duplicate previous college work. The student must be enrolled or matriculated in a degree program, and he or she may not be beyond the freshman year.

Methods of Awarding Credit

Because the General Examinations are measures of college-level knowledge in five broad areas of the liberal

arts, some institutions experience difficulty in applying their scores to course and degree requirements. This difficulty does not occur with the CLEP Subject Examinations, designed to match identifiable courses.

Some institutions use the General Examinations to satisfy part of a distribution/area/general requirement without a particular course specification; for example, the test in Humanities may count as 6 credits toward a 12-credit Humanities requirement. In other cases, credit is granted for a specific course or course sequence. The Mathematics test, for instance, may be the equivalent of Math 101-102. Alternatively, the General Examinations may be used for free elective credit without further specification.

Since two or more ways of awarding credit may be used at an institution, respondents were asked to identify all methods used at their college or university (item A-4) and to specify the method most commonly used (item A-5).

Table 1 on page 8 summarizes data on these methods and frequency of use.

Awarding credit by course is followed by more institutions (86 percent) than any other method. For half the respondents, it is also the most frequently used procedure for assigning General Examination credit.

Almost two-thirds of the institutions indicated that they use the requirement-fulfillment and free-elective methods of awarding credit. However, 38 percent of the respondents reported requirement-fulfillment as the most commonly used technique, but only 7 percent designated free electives as the principal procedure.

Thus, it appears that the General Examinations are ordinarily used in place of specific courses or in fulfillment (full or partial) of particular requirements.

Table 1. Methods of Awarding Credit to Students Who Pass the CLEP General Examinations

	Methods Used for Awarding Credit		Most Frequently Used Method	
	Number of Institutions	Percentage of Institutions*	Number of Institutions	Percentage of Institutions
A. Credit is granted to fulfill area, distribution, or general requirement without specification of course	325	66%	206	38%
B. Credit is granted as a substitute for specific course(s)	421	86%	265	50%
C. Credit is granted as a substitute for an elective	294	60%	37	7%
D. General Examinations are used in another way	38	8%	10	2%

*Percentages do not total 100 because respondents could check more than one method.

Two percent of those answering item A-4 did not answer item A-5. Some of the respondents who indicated that they use the General Examinations in some other way than for awarding credit specified that they are used for placement and academic counseling.

The colleges and universities stating that they follow course-matching procedures were asked also to select the course titles they use. Table 2 shows these results.

The highest degree of consensus was found for English Composition. Sixty percent of the respondents matched this test with a course entitled English Composition.

The Mathematics examination was matched with an Introductory Mathematics course by nearly half the responding institutions; a minority chose the same title with a restriction for nonscience majors. Some of the other titles submitted by respondents were General Mathematics, Business Mathematics, and Introductory College Algebra.

Social Sciences and History was matched with one particular course by a large portion of the respondents. Forty-one percent specified Introduction to Social Sciences as the course most closely related to the test.

Neither the Natural Sciences nor Humanities examination was very strongly identified with a single course. The subsections of both tests, however, are significant when credit is assigned by course. The subsections of Natural Sciences (biological and physical sciences) were used by a significant percentage in matching the test to courses. To a lesser extent, the subsections of Social Sciences and History are also used in this manner.

A large percentage of "Other" responses can be briefly summarized. For Natural Sciences, most of the titles submitted by respondents did not have the restriction

"for nonscience majors only." For Social Sciences and History, some of the other titles were: General Social Sciences, Introductory Sociology, Contemporary Society, Institutions in the U.S., and Western Civilization. For Humanities, the courses included the following: an Interdisciplinary Course in Humanities, Western Cultural Tradition, Art Appreciation, and World Literature, as well as others.

Determination of Cutting Scores

One of the more critical and complex decisions made by institutions using the General Examinations concerns the determination of cutting scores: the scores at which credit will be granted. Among the factors needing consideration are the institution's philosophy, student

Table 2. Course Titles Used to Assign Credit for Each General Examination

	Number of Institutions	Percentage of Institutions*
English Composition Examination		
English Composition	296	60%
Freshman Composition and Literature	107	22%
Communication Skills	47	10%
Other	39	8%
Humanities Examination		
Introduction to Humanities	123	25%
Introduction to Literature	161	33%
Introduction to Fine Arts	156	32%
Other	103	21%
Mathematics Examination		
Introductory Mathematics for Nonscience Majors Only	78	16%
Introductory Mathematics for Any Student	233	47%
Other	76	15%
Natural Sciences Examination		
Introduction to Natural Sciences for Nonscience Majors Only	48	10%
Introduction to Natural Sciences for Any Student	163	33%
Introduction to Biological Sciences for Nonscience Majors Only	117	24%
Introduction to Physical Sciences for Nonscience Majors Only	120	24%
Other	83	17%
Social Sciences and History Examination		
Introduction to Social Sciences	200	41%
World History	106	22%
American History	84	17%
American Government	46	9%
Other	107	22%

*Percentages do not total 100 because respondents could check more than one course title or no titles.

needs, curriculum structures, and the principles and techniques of educational measurement. However, the questionnaire did not attempt to obtain information on *why* certain standards were chosen, but simply on *which* standards are used to establish cutting scores. Respondents were asked in item A-6 to check all methods that applied. Consequently, the percentages of responses total more than 100 percent. Table 3 lists the methods used, in descending order of frequency.

Of the 526 institutions responding to item A-6, 270 (51 percent) indicated that more than one procedure is used to set cutting scores.

The only standard used by more than half the institutions is that of national norms. Faculty review of the tests, as well as the practice of comparable institutions, plays a role in the determination of cutting scores at about one-third of the institutions.

Three methods were used by about 15 percent of the respondents: local norming, statewide policy, and the recommendation of the American Council on Education. Eleven percent of the institutions responding to this question have no central policy but permit each department to set its own standards.

Other standards mentioned by respondents for the determination of cutting scores included the Freshman Norms of 1964, State Boards of Higher Education, agreements among groups of colleges, and, most frequently, a combination of criteria.

Table 3. Standards Used by Institutions to Set Cutting Scores on the General Examinations

	Number of Institutions	Percentage of Institutions*
1. Standards are set from national norms.	288	59%
2. Standards are set by faculty review of tests.	183	37%
3. Standards of comparable institutions are used as a guide.	174	35%
4. Standards are based upon our own norming studies.	77	16%
5. Standards are set by statewide policy.	74	15%
6. Credit is awarded at the 25th percentile score following the American Council on Education recommendation.	74	15%
7. Each division or department sets its own standards.	53	11%
8. Standards are set based upon considerations not mentioned above.	50	10%

*Percentages do not total 100 because respondents could check more than one standard.

INFORMATION ON CLEP GENERAL EXAMINATION SCORES RECEIVED FOR 1973-74

The questions in Section B of the questionnaire were designed to gather information on topics relating to use of and success on the General Examinations and to institutional awarding of credit.

Freshman Class Size

Institutions responding to the survey were asked to provide in item B-1 the approximate number of full-time and part-time students registered as "freshmen" during the 1973-74 academic year. A freshman was defined as a student with less than a full year of college credit. Fifty percent of the responding institutions had fewer than 1,000 freshmen; another 25 percent had fewer than 2,000. Five percent of the institutions reported freshman classes of more than 6,000 students. The largest enrollment reported was 28,000, but this was for a system rather than a single institution.

Number of Students Submitting Scores and Receiving Credit

The questions concerning the number of students who submitted General Examination scores and the number

who received credit (items B-2 and B-3) can be discussed together. A subsequent item (B-5) provides more detailed information about each of the five examinations.

A total of 386 institutions supplied information on the number of students *submitting* General Examination scores. The highest number submitting scores was 3,313; the median number was 48.

Some 388 institutions answered the question concerning the number of students who *received* credit. The highest number to receive credit was 2,381, and the median number of students receiving credit was 32.

Of those answering, 376 (70 percent) provided data both on the number submitting scores and the number receiving credit. The percentage of students earning credit can be calculated with the figures provided by each institution. Table 4 on page 10 gives the number of institutions that awarded credit to various percentages of CLEP candidates. For example, 22 percent of the respondents reported that between 81 percent and 90 percent of the students submitting scores actually received credit for one or more examinations.

The typical institution awarded credit to 74 percent of its students who submitted scores.

Caution must be observed in interpreting responses that involve numbers of students. Some institutions keep records only on numbers of test scores for which credit

Table 4. Distribution of Institutions According to the Percentage of CLEP Candidates Receiving Credit

Percentage of Students Submitting Scores Who Received Credit	Number and Percentage of 376 Responding Institutions
91-100%	96 (25%)
81-90%	81 (22%)
71-80%	53 (14%)
61-70%	46 (12%)
51-60%	32 (9%)
50% and below	68 (18%)

is awarded rather than on numbers of students. If such an institution were to give the number of test scores in reply to the question about the number of students, the results would be inflated (that is, a student who submitted four test scores would be counted as four students rather than one). Nevertheless, this factor probably does not greatly affect the percentages computed from these questions because a respondent would likely be consistent in reporting the number submitting scores and the number receiving credit.

Students Submitting General Examination Scores through USAFI (Item B-4)

As indicated earlier, the United States Armed Forces Institute administered approximately 50,000 General Examinations in 1973-74. Item B-4 sought to discover to what extent these servicemen and veterans used their scores to obtain college credit.

Fifty percent of the institutions (268) responded to this question, and the results are shown in Table 5. Of them, 47 institutions reported receiving 21 or more USAFI score reports. One institution received over 900 USAFI reports.

Table 5. Distribution of Institutions According to the Number of Students Submitting General Examination Scores on USAFI Transcripts

Number of Students Submitting USAFI Transcripts	Number and Percentage of 268 Reporting Institutions
None	46 (17%)
1-5	108 (40%)
6-10	33 (12%)
11-15	20 (8%)
16-20	14 (5%)
21-25	12 (5%)
26-30	6 (2%)
31 and over	29 (11%)

Table 6. Total Scores: Students Submitting Scores and Receiving Credit, and Percentage of Students Receiving Credit

	English Composition	Mathematics	Humanities	Natural Sciences	Social Sciences and History
Number of Institutions with Data on Students Submitting Scores	278	265	285	283	287
Maximum Number of Students Submitting Scores	2,226	1,613	2,333	2,367	2,295
Median Number of Students Submitting Scores	33	27	28	28	30
Number of Institutions with Data on Students Receiving Credit	283	255	253	243	248
Maximum Number of Students Receiving Credit	1,013	1,406	1,042	1,369	1,113
Median Number of Students Receiving Credit	17	16	17	16	16
Number of Institutions with Data on Both Students Submitting Scores and Receiving Credit	265	241	243	231	237
Median Percentage of Students Receiving Credit	54%	63%	56%	60%	60%

Data on Credit Granted for Each General Examination*

Institutions were asked to provide information on five different topics relating to each of the General Examinations: the number of students submitting scores, the number receiving credit, the minimum cutting score (both for total scores and subscores), and the number of credits awarded for each test. The results are presented in three tables.

Table 6 shows the number of students submitting scores and the number receiving credit.

More than half the institutions in the survey were able to provide some information on the number of test scores submitted for which credit was given (number of test scores and number of students are the same for this question). Slightly less than half had data on both submission of scores and receipt of credit for each examination.

Only the maximum numbers of students submitting scores and receiving credit are shown in Table 6. The minimum in every case was zero, indicating either that

*For respondents indicating two cutting scores and two different credit awards in item B-6, the lower values were used and the answer to item 7 was changed, if necessary, from "No" to "Yes."

no student reached the cutting score at some college or that some colleges did not grant credit for a particular examination. The percentage of students earning credit ranged from zero to 100 percent on each test; only median percentages are given.

Across the five tests, the median number of students submitting scores, the number receiving credit, and the percentage of success are quite similar. Although fewer Mathematics scores were submitted, a higher percentage of students was awarded credit.

The median percentage of students earning credit on a test-by-test basis, ranging from 54 percent to 63 percent, is compatible with the data shown in Table 4. The earlier question was different: How many students received credit from any of the test scores submitted. There the median was 74 percent and, in combination with item B-6, this figure implies that many students receive credit for some of the General Examinations but not for all.

Table 7 provides information on cutting scores and credit awarded. Table 8 presents a frequency distribution of cutting scores.

Interestingly, Table 7 shows that the median cutting score for each test is at the 50th percentile of the 1963 norms (and the 1973 norms for the revised Mathematics test). Table 8 shows that the scaled score range of 420-500 includes about 90 percent of the institutional cut-offs.

The median amount of credit awarded for each test is

Table 7. Total Scores: Cutting Scores and Credit Awarded

	English Composition	Mathematics	Humanities	Natural Sciences	Social Sciences and History
Cutting Scores					
Number of Institutions Responding	356	333	316	307	318
Maximum Cutting Score Reported	600	600	600	600	600
Median Cutting Score	494	495	489	489	488
Credit Awarded					
Semester Hours					
Number of Institutions Reporting	263	249	217	209	221
Range of Credits Granted	2-12	3-18	2-12	2-18	2-10
Median Award	6	6	6	6	6
Quarter Hours					
Number of Institutions Reporting	67	62	60	55	62
Range of Credits Granted	3-12	3-12	3-15	3-13	3-12
Median Award	8	8	9	9	9

Table 8. Frequency Distributions of Cutting Scores by Institutions Using the General Examinations

Score Intervals	English Composition No. %	Mathematics No. %	Humanities No. %	Natural Sciences No. %	Social Sciences and History No. %
581-600	1 .3%	4 1%	2 .6%	2 .7%	1 .3%
561-580	4 1%	2 .6%	3 1%	3 1%	5 2%
541-560	7 2%	7 2%	8 3%	8 3%	5 2%
521-540	8 2%	6 2%	3 1%	4 1%	4 1%
501-520	7 2%	6 2%	5 2%	4 1%	5 2%
481-500	208 58%	191 57%	177 56%	177 58%	180 56%
461-480	30 8%	19 6%	31 10%	23 8%	30 9%
441-460	31 9%	35 11%	29 9%	26 9%	28 9%
421-440	49 14%	30 9%	50 16%	52 17%	49 15%
401-420	5 1%	27 8%	3 1%	3 1%	6 2%
Less than 401	7 2%	6 2%	6 2%	5 2%	6 2%

either 6 semester hours or 8-to-9 quarter hours. Table 7 also gives the range of credit awarded for each test.

Less information was obtained on subscores than on total scores. Precise data are lacking on the number of institutions using subscores for granting credit, on whether subscores are used alone or in conjunction with total scores, and on the percentage of students who earned credit on the subsections. Table 9 on the next page shows the number of students receiving credit based on subscore. It also furnishes subscore cut-offs and credits awarded.

From the information collected, some inferences may reasonably be drawn. About half as many institutions gave students credit for subscores as gave credit for total scores (the Mathematics test excepted, since its subscores are not course-related). This confirms the earlier implication that, for a large segment of respondents, subscores in Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences and History play a significant role in awarding credit (see the discussion on matching courses to these three tests on pages 7-8). Following the pattern of the data presented in Table 6, the Table 9 medians in each category tend to be similar if not identical.

Additional Credit for Higher Cutting Scores

Eight percent (45 institutions) reported in item B-7 using differential cutting scores, for example, 3 credits for a score of 450, and 6 credits for 500. Eighty-one percent of the institutions in the survey did not award additional credit for higher scores, and 11 percent did not respond.

Table 9. Subscores: Number Receiving Credit; Cutting Scores; and Credit Awarded

	Mathematics		Humanities		Natural Sciences		Social Sciences and History	
	Skills	Content	Fine Arts	Literature	Biological Sciences	Physical Sciences	Social Sciences	History
Institutions with Data on Number of Students Receiving Credit for Subscores								
Maximum Number of Students	320	320	1,887	448	1,748	1,387	1,729	475
Median Number of Students	9	9	12	10	12	12	12	11
Cutting Scores								
Number of Institutions Responding	87	86	169	165	178	178	152	151
Maximum Cutting Score Reported	57	66	59	59	60	60	59	59
Median Cutting Score	50	50	50	49	50	49	50	49
Credit Awarded								
Semester Hours								
Number of Institutions Reporting	45	47	129	129	141	142	129	125
Range of Credit Granted	1-15	1-15	2-9	2-6	3-12	2-6	3-18	2-9
Median Award	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Quarter Hours								
Number of Institutions Reporting	13	15	29	27	40	37	28	26
Range of Credit Granted	2-5	2-5	3-6	3-10	3-12	3-12	3-6	3-10
Median Award	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH ON CLEP GENERAL EXAMINATIONS

The purpose of Section C of the questionnaire was to gather data that had been obtained through studies carried out on their own students by institutions using the General Examinations.

Respondents who indicated that their college or university had not done any research were instructed to skip to the next section of the questionnaire. If they answered Section C without having done a study, their responses are not included in the statistics reported here, a procedure followed to minimize the amount of subjective judgment.

Twenty percent of the respondents (107 institutions) reported having conducted studies related to the CLEP General Examinations.

Number of Minority Students Receiving Credit for General Examinations

In item C-2 a total of 27 institutions reported awarding credit to one or more black, Spanish-speaking, or American Indian students in 1973-74. One institution awarded credit to 100 minority students. The remaining institutions had no data or did not respond to the item.

Status of Full- or Part-Time Students Receiving Credit for General Examinations

Three-fourths of the respondents indicated in item C-3 that all or most of the students earning credit were classified as full-time.

No institution stated that all those receiving credit were part-time students. Six institutions (6 percent of the respondents), however, stated that most of their students were part-time. Eleven percent stated that those earning credit from the General Examinations were about evenly divided between full-time and part-time students.

Performance in Subsequent Courses of Students Receiving Credit

In all, 58 institutions reported in item C-4 that CLEP students earned significantly better grades in subsequent courses than other students; 18 other institutions stated that the grades were not significantly different. No institution reported that students receiving General Examination credit had earned lower grades.

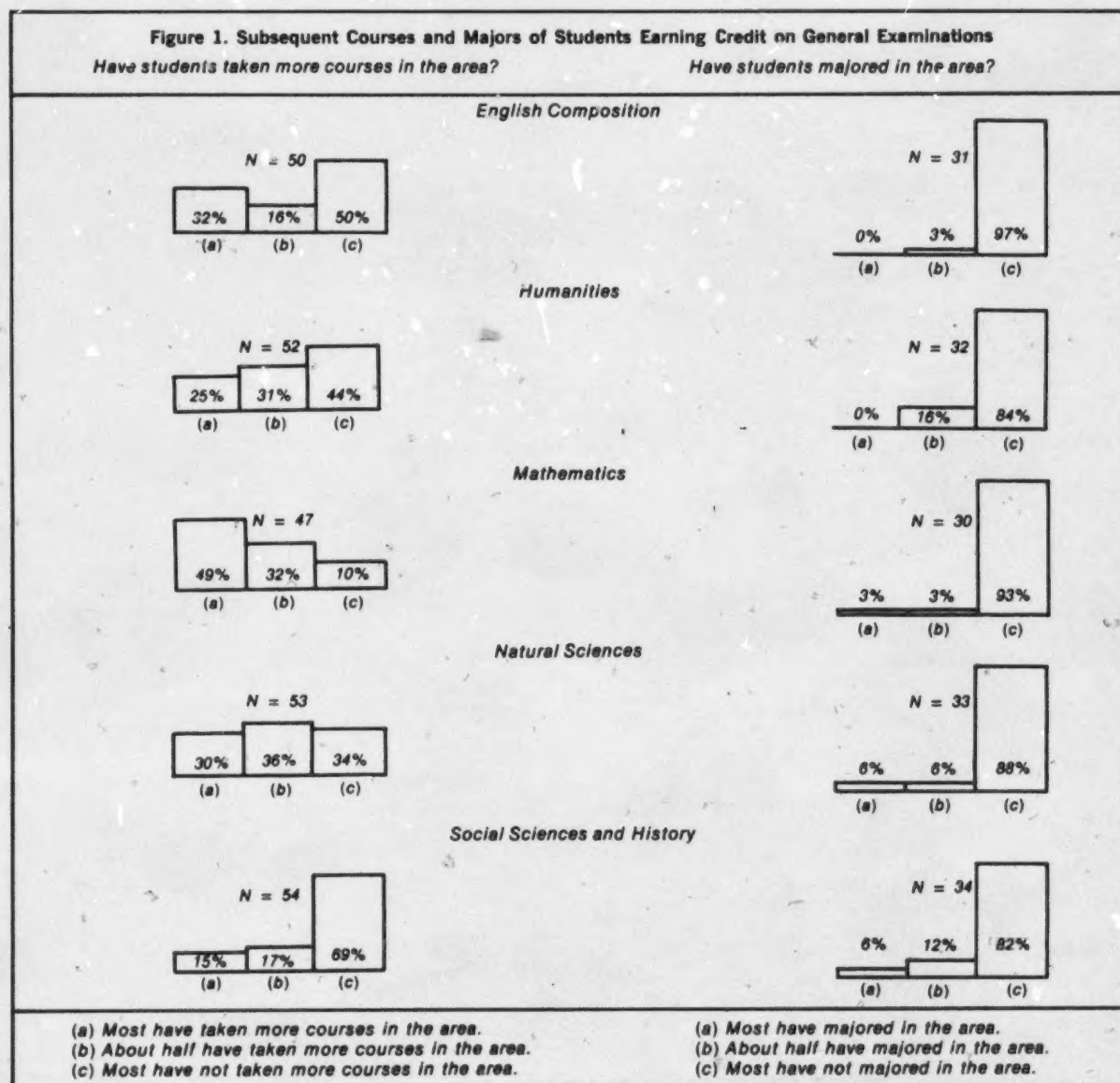
Subsequent Courses and Majors of Students Earning General Examination Credit

Items C-5 and C-6 were intended to determine what subsequent course work students took in an area in which they had earned credit-by-examination.

The results suggest that students generally do not major in a subject (item C-6) within the area in which they received CLEA General Examination credit, a finding consistent across all subjects. Whether they take

further courses (item C-5) in the area appears to depend upon the area. About two-thirds of the respondents supplying information indicated that students generally do not take more courses in Social Sciences and History; in Mathematics, however, they generally do.

Figure 1* shows the percentages of institutions responding to the three alternatives presented in items C-5 and C-6. The number of respondents is shown on each histogram. Most institutions did not have enough information to answer these questions, so any inferences from the data must be made with caution.



*In interpreting Figure 1 and the tables in this booklet, remember that the percentages refer to institutions' responses and not necessarily to percentages of students. Responses would have to be weighted by the corresponding num-

bers of students receiving credit from each institution in order to lead to conclusions about proportions of students.

USE OF OTHER EXAMINATIONS FOR AWARDING CREDIT

The purpose of Section D of the questionnaire was to determine to what extent institutions using the General Examinations were also using other credit-by-examination instruments.

CLEP Subject Examinations

A total of 454 institutions (85 percent) reported in item D-1 that they awarded credit for CLEP Subject Examinations in 1973-74. The following distribution is based on the 292 institutions providing student data.

Number of Students Receiving Credit for CLEP Subject Examinations	Number of Institutions
1-10	174
11-30	70
31 and above	48

An additional 75 institutions (14 percent) did not grant credit for any Subject Examinations in 1973-74.

Advanced Placement Examinations

A total of 307 institutions (57 percent) reported in item D-2 that in 1973-74 they awarded credit for Advanced Placement Examinations, and 210 other institutions (39 percent) reported that they did not. The 204 colleges and universities that provided data on the number of AP students receiving credit can be divided as follows:

Number of Students Receiving Credit for AP	Number of Institutions
1-10	142
11-30	22
31 and above	40

Item D-2 dealt with the number of students report-

ing both a CLEP score and an AP grade. A total of 116 institutions provided information:

Number of Students Reporting Both CLEP Scores and AP Scores	Number of Institutions
0	42
1-10	60
11-30	6
31 and above	8

A total of 323 of the institutions using the General Examinations responded to the question on whether the use of both programs (CLEP and AP) created any problems or conflicts in awarding credit. Of these, 289 institutions (89 percent) stated they experienced no problem or conflict, and 34 institutions (11 percent) reported difficulties in dealing with both programs. These difficulties centered principally in duplication of credit for CLEP and AP and in which of the testing programs students should be advised to participate.

Other Examinations Used for Credit*

The aim of item D-3 was to find out to what extent institutions employing the General Examinations also made use of other credit-by-examination instruments than CLEP and Advanced Placement.

Table 10 shows the number of institutions using specified additional instruments and the number that reported totals of students receiving credit on the basis of the instruments.

The first section of Table 10 shows the number of institutions using these instruments together with the percentage of the 535 institutions surveyed. The three columns of the table's second section give the number of institutions that provided information, the maximum

Table 10. Use of Other Instruments for Awarding Credit

Instrument	Section I Institutions Using These Instruments		Section II Institutions Reporting Number of Students Receiving Credit		
	Number of Institutions	Percentage of Institutions in Survey	Number of Institutions	Maximum Number of Students Receiving Credit	Median Number of Students Receiving Credit
Local or Departmental Examinations	342	(64%)	179	2,137	20
Life Experience	109	(20%)	66	400	10
Other	68	(13%)	39	1,500	15
Professional Association Tests	65	(12%)	33	65	7
College Board Achievement Tests	43	(8%)	27	3,899	22
College Proficiency Examination Program	40	(7%)	23	136	10
American College Testing Program	37	(7%)	18	420	23
State Examinations	8	(1%)	5	30	6

*Respondents who put a check in the left column of item D-3 indicating that their institution accepts the criterion but who left the box blank were interpreted as accepting the criterion for awarding credit even though they either could not or would not specify the number of students receiving credit. Those

who did not check the left column but who put a number greater than zero in the box were counted as if they had checked the column. If, however, they did not check the left column and put a zero in the box, they were tabulated as not accepting the criterion.

number of students to receive credit at an institution through each instrument, and the median number of students who received credit. Table 10 reports these data in descending order, on the basis of the number of user institutions.

About two-thirds of the institutions using the General Examinations also use local or departmental tests. Life experience credit is a procedure in operation at one-fifth of the colleges and universities.

The College Board Achievement Tests and the Amer-

ican College Testing Program tests are used by approximately the same number of institutions. The median numbers of students receiving credit through the two programs are also similar.

Thirteen percent of the respondents stated that they use credit-by-examination methods not listed in the questionnaire, among them the following: USAFI Subject Standardized Tests, formal courses at Service Schools, Modern Language Association tests, and a variety of nontraditional programs.

COMMENTS OF RESPONDENTS

On the last page of the questionnaire, respondents were invited to comment about the General Examinations or their use at their institution. Many chose to do so.

Several respondents expressed frustration in trying to supply all the data requested in the questionnaire. One, for example, wrote, "The figures presented do not add up. They are the best we can do with the records we have kept. It seems that we cannot keep all the detailed records that are needed."

Some criticisms and concerns about the program were offered:

"We feel that the tests need revising and renorming. In the beginning, most use of them was made by the military, but now more and more colleges are using the tests to award credit to freshmen just finishing high school."

"There is continued concern by faculty regarding the level of difficulty of the CLEP General Examinations. I often receive requests concerning the 50th percentile level and what that actually translates to in the number of rights and wrongs."

"We do not have in our curriculum the sort of general education courses for which the General Examinations are designed. Therefore, the faculty thought it unwise

to award credit on the basis of the exams."

One administrator offered a mixed appraisal. "CLEP's original purpose of giving adults a boost up the academic ladder is great, but I hope one of the things this survey will recommend is the abolition of credit to recent high school graduates."

Other administrators had more positive comments regarding the value of CLEP:

"This is our fourth year in the program. We have followed the students who earned credit and are very pleased with the results."

"An excellent approach to awarding credit to above average or gifted students."

"Our data, especially on the positive effect CLEP has had on the students involved, seem to validate our current policy in using it."

"Their existence as a general education package is invaluable."

"CLEP has developed strong faculty support over the last three years. I have become an unofficial ambassador for CLEP in our state—which is a considerable reversal for a person who seriously questioned CLEP when he first reviewed it."

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire Sent to Institutions Using CLEP General Examinations

SURVEY OF INSTITUTIONS USING
THE GENERAL EXAMINATIONS OF THE
COLLEGE-LEVEL EXAMINATION PROGRAM (CLEP)

THIS NATIONAL STUDY IS BEING SPONSORED BY THE
COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL CREDIT OF THE AMERICAN
COUNCIL ON EDUCATION AND THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE
EXAMINATION BOARD.



EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE
PRINCETON, N.J.

SECTION A: INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES REGARDING CLEP GENERAL EXAMINATIONS

Policies regarding the use of CLEP General Examination scores vary from one institution to another. The questions in this section relate to policies regarding student qualifications, methods of awarding credit, and determination of cutting scores.

Questions 1-3 pertain to qualifications that a student might be required to meet in order to obtain credit for passing the CLEP General Examinations. Please indicate if you have any such requirements.

1. Can the student receiving credit through CLEP General Examinations be a recent high school graduate?
☐ Yes
☐ No, the student must have been out of high school at least _____ years.
2. Must the student successfully complete a specified number of courses at your institution before credit for passing the CLEP General Examinations is placed on his transcript?
☐ Yes (please explain) _____
☐ No _____
3. Must a student meet any other special requirements in order to receive credit through CLEP General Examinations?
☐ Yes (please explain) _____
☐ No _____

4. Depending upon an institution's policy, credit for passing a CLEP General Examination may be awarded in a number of ways. Please check all of the ways which apply to your institution.

A ☐ Credit is granted to fulfill part of an area, distribution, or general education requirement without specification of a particular course.

B ☐ Credit is granted as a substitute for the completion of a particular course or set of courses. Please indicate which of the following course titles best describe the courses for which credit by examination is granted. (Check all that apply)

- ENGLISH COMPOSITION GENERAL EXAM (not the CLEP Subject Exam)

- ☐ English Composition
- ☐ Freshman Composition and Literature
- ☐ Communication Skills
- ☐ Other (specify) _____

HUMANITIES EXAM

- ☐ Introduction to Humanities
- ☐ Introduction to Literature
- ☐ Introduction to Fine Arts
- ☐ Other (specify) _____

MATHEMATICS EXAM

- ☐ Introductory Mathematics for non-science majors only
- ☐ Introductory Mathematics for any student
- ☐ Other (specify) _____

NATURAL SCIENCES EXAM

- ☐ Introduction to Natural Sciences for non-science majors only
- ☐ Introduction to Natural Sciences for any student
- ☐ Introduction to Biological Sciences for non-science majors only
- ☐ Introduction to Physical Sciences for non-science majors only
- ☐ Other (specify) _____

SOCIAL SCIENCES & HISTORY EXAM

- ☐ Introduction to Social Sciences
- ☐ World History
- ☐ American History
- ☐ American Government
- ☐ Other (specify) _____

C ☐ Credit is granted as a substitute for a free elective.

D ☐ CLEP General Examinations are used in ways other than those described above. (Please explain) _____

5. In question number 4 you may have checked more than one way in which credit through CLEP General Examinations is given. Each way is identified by a letter: A, B, C or D. In the box below please print the letter designating the one way in which credit is most frequently granted.

6. How did your institution set the cutting scores for the General Examinations? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Standards were set from national norms.
- ☐ Standards were set by Statewide policy.
- ☐ Standards of other comparable institutions were used as a guide.
- ☐ Standards were based upon our own norming studies.
- ☐ Standards were set by faculty review of tests.
- ☐ Credit is awarded at the 25th percentile score following the American Council on Education recommendation.
- ☐ Each division or department has set its own standards.
- ☐ Standards were set based upon considerations not mentioned above. (Please explain) _____

SECTION B: INFORMATION ABOUT CLEP GENERAL EXAMINATION SCORES
RECEIVED FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 1973-74

1. What was the approximate number of full-time and part-time students registered as "freshmen" during the 1973-74 academic year? A freshman is defined as a student with less than a full year of college credit.

Check here if
information is
not available ----- ☐

2. For the academic year 1973-74, approximately how many students submitted CLEP General Examination scores to your institution?

Check here if
information is
not available ----- ☐

3. Approximately how many of these students received credit in one or more areas?

Check here if
information is
not available ----- ☐

4. Approximately how many students submitted CLEP General Examination scores on United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI) transcripts? (These are students who had taken CLEP exams while in military service.)

Check here if
information is
not available ----- ☐

5. In question number 6 you will be asked to indicate the number of credits awarded to students. In order to make this information meaningful, it must be comparable from one institution to another. If you do not define a "credit" as either a semester hour or a quarter hour, please translate it into one of these two units for the purpose of answering question 6. Please mark the box below to indicate whether you will be using semester hours or quarter hours.

() Semester hours or equivalent
() Quarter hours or equivalent

6. For each exam area, please indicate (1) the approximate number of students who submitted scores, (2) the approximate number who received some credit for that test, (3) and (4) the minimum scaled cutting score used by your institution for awarding credit, and (5) the number of credits (as defined in question 5) awarded to each student attaining at least that score level.

EXAM AREA	1. NUMBER SUBMITTING SCORES	2. NUMBER RECEIVING CREDIT	3. CUTTING SCORE (100-800)	4. CUTTING SCORE (120-80)	5. NUMBER OF CREDITS PER STUDENT
English Composition					
Humanities Total					
Fine Arts					
Literature					
Mathematics total					
Skills					
Content					
Natural Sciences total					
Biological Sciences					
Physical Sciences					
Social Sciences & History total					
Social Sciences					
History					

7. Did you award additional credit at higher cutting scores?

() Yes (Please explain or submit schedule) _____
() No

Some institutions have done studies related to their CLEP General Examination program. Some have compared CLEP students with the rest of the student population; others have studied their subsequent academic performance; some have participated in norming studies.

If you have done any studies, please answer the questions relevant to the data you collected. Those questions which are not relevant to your research can be answered by checking the category labeled "Information not available." Copies of your studies would be greatly appreciated.

Please check the appropriate box below to indicate whether you have conducted any studies, and proceed to the designated section.

- () No studies have been done by this institution, and none are in progress. *Skip to Section D*
- () No studies have been done by this institution, but one is currently in progress. *Skip to Section D*
- () Studies have been done by this institution. Please answer the questions below

11. Do you have any studies currently in progress?

- () Yes
() No

2. Approximately how many Black, Spanish-speaking, and American Indian students received credit through CLEP General Examinations last year (1973-74)?

Information is not available +++++

3. How would you describe the status of the students who have received credit through the exams?

- () All have been full-time.
- () Most have been full-time.
- () About half have been full-time and half have been part-time.
- () Most have been part-time.
- () All have been part-time.

Information is not available

4. How have the subsequent grades of students receiving credit compared with those of the general student population?

- () Their grades have been significantly better.
() Their grades have not been significantly different.
() Their grades have been significantly lower.

Check here if information is not available ☐

5. Considering each exam area separately, please indicate whether students have generally gone on to take more courses in the same area in which they received credit.

1. English Composition
2. Humanities
3. Mathematics
4. Natural Sciences
5. Social Sciences & History

- | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|---|
| () | () | () | () | a. | Yes, most have taken more courses
in this area. |
| () | () | () | () | b. | About half have taken more courses
in this area. |
| () | () | () | () | c. | No, most have not taken more courses
in this area. |
| () | () | () | () | d. | Credit has not been awarded in this
area. |
| () | () | () | () | e. | Information is not available. |

6. For each exam area, please indicate whether students have generally majored in a subject within the area in which they received credit through CLIP General Exams.

1. English Composition
2. Humanities
3. Mathematics
4. Natural Sciences
5. Social Sciences & History

SECTION D: USE OF OTHER EXAMS FOR AWARDING CREDIT

In addition to the CLEP General Examinations, some institutions use the CLEP Subject Examinations, Advanced Placement (AP), and other exams for awarding credit. The questions in this section relate to the co-ordination of these different programs.

1. Did your institution grant credit for CLEP Subject Examinations last year (1973-74)?

() Yes
() No

If so, approximately how many students during the past academic year received credit for passing one or more Subject exams?

Information is not available -----

2. Did your institution grant credit for the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) Examinations last year?

() Yes
() No

If you answered 'no', proceed to question 3.

- A. Approximately how many students received course credit during the past academic year based upon AP grades?

Information is not available -----

- B. Approximately how many students submitted both CLEP scores and AP grades last year?

Information is not available -----

- C. Has the use of both programs (CLEP and AP) created any problems or conflicts in your procedure of awarding credit through examinations?

() Yes (please explain) _____
() No _____

3. Listed below are other criteria which may have been used for awarding course credit. In the left column please check those which your institution used. In the right column specify the number of students who were awarded credit based upon that particular criterion. If this information is not available, please check the corresponding small boxes.

Criterion	No. of students receiving credit	No. of students for whom info.
() American College Testing Program (ACT)		☐
() College Board Achievement Tests		☐
() Tests prepared by professional associations (e.g., American Chemical Society, National League for Nurses)		☐
() College Proficiency Examination Program (CPEP)		☐
() Local or departmental exams		☐
() State exams		☐
() Life experience		☐
() Other (specify) _____		☐

If you wish to comment about the CLEP General Examinations or their use at your institution, please use the space below. The results of any study you have done would be greatly appreciated. When this study has been completed, a copy of the final report will be sent to you.

APPENDIX B

Letters and Postcard Sent to Institutions
and American Council on Education
Press Release

AMERICAN
COUNCIL ON
EDUCATION



ONE DUPOUY CIRCLE • WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006

12 26 '74

From: Frank Skinner
(202) 433-4766

For immediate release

WASHINGTON -- The American Council on Education and the College Entrance Examination Board are sponsoring a national study and reformatting of the College-Level Examination Program's general examinations. The study is being conducted by the Educational Testing Service under the direction of a steering committee of nine educators and researchers appointed by J. Boyd Page, president of the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States and chairman of the ACE Commission on Educational Credit.

The study, expected to be completed in a year, will provide reference data and guidelines which the commission can use in reevaluating its current recommendations. The ACE commission now recommends that up to 30 semester hours of credit be granted in the areas covered by the CLEP general examinations, namely, English composition, humanities, mathematics, natural sciences, and social science-history.

Data collected also will be made available to colleges and universities for their use in formulating institutional policies regarding the program which began in the early 1960s. The number of candidates grew in the past two years from 21,000 to 88,000. In addition, almost 200,000 members of the armed services make use of the CLEP tests every year.

page 2

The CLEP Study Steering Committee, chaired by Allan Tucker, vice-chancellor for academic affairs of the State University of Florida, is currently considering study methodology and procedures. Following are other members of the committee: Dorothy Arns, assistant provost, Michigan State University; William Coffman, E. F. Lindquist Professor of Educational Measurement, University of Iowa; J. Douglas Ousey, executive secretary of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers; Caroline Graham, director of counseling services, Spelman College; John Losak, director of counseling, testing and research, Miami-Dade Community College; Franklin L. McKean, dean of admissions and registration, University of Utah; Fred E. Wellman, executive secretary of the Illinois Junior College Board; and Edward White, chairman of the department of English, California State College, San Bernardino.



College Entrance Examination Board
360 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10019
(212) 562-4210

Dear Colleague:

As you may know, the American Council on Education through its Commission on Educational Credit and the College Entrance Examination Board are undertaking a National Study of the CLEP General Examinations. A copy of the news release with more information on this project is enclosed.

One phase of the National Study calls for a survey of colleges and universities that have made use of the CLEP General Examinations. This survey is being sent to you, as the official who has received General Examination score reports at your institution, and as the one most able to provide or obtain information on the awarding of credit for these tests.

We ask your help and patience in supplying the data for the questionnaire. We realize that in some cases the figures will be hard to obtain. Nevertheless, there has been a long-standing need for national data on the amount of credit being earned through the General Examinations. Only through the joint efforts of many can this information be gathered.

The questionnaire which covers the period from July 1, 1973 to June 30, 1974 is divided into four parts. Section A is concerned with policies on the General Examination at your institution. Section B collects data on credit awarded. Section C relates to institutional research. Section D asks about other tests for granting credit. The final page of the questionnaire provides an opportunity to comment on the CLEP General Examinations.

This survey is being sent to all colleges and universities that obtained General Examination scores in 1973-74 whether through CLEP national center or institutional administrations, or through USAFI.

A copy of the results of the study will be sent to you when it is completed. We hope that you can return the questionnaire as soon as possible. If you have any questions on the survey, please call Mr. Walter Shea collect (609-921-9000 ext. 3484) at Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Jack N. Arbolino

Jack N. Arbolino
Program Services Officer
College-Level Examination Program
College Entrance Examination Board

March 10, 1975

If you have not yet returned your questionnaire entitled "Survey of Institutions Using the General Examinations of the College-Level Examination Program (CLEP)," we would appreciate your completing it as soon as possible as returning it in the envelope provided or mailing it to Mrs. Theresa Jones, Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey, 08540.

Thank you for your cooperation.



College Entrance Examination Board
888 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10019
(212) 562-4210

Dear Colleague:

A few weeks ago, a questionnaire on the Use of the CLEP General Examinations at your institution was directed to you. At this time, according to our records, we have not received the completed questionnaire in our office. We realize that you may not have had a chance to complete it or that other more pressing concerns may have prevented you from doing so.

However, we are very anxious to obtain as much information on this topic as you can supply. In the event that you do not have the questionnaire handy, we are enclosing another copy.

This survey has been sent to all Colleges and Universities that obtained General Examination scores in 1973-74 whether through CLEP national centers or institutional administrations, or through USAFI.

A copy of the results of this study undertaken by the American Council on Education and the College Entrance Examination Board will be sent to you when it is completed. If you have any questions on the survey, please call Mr. Walter Shea collect (609-921-9000 ext. 3484) at Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Jack N. Arbolino

Jack N. Arbolino
Program Services Officer
College-Level Examination Program
College Entrance Examination Board